

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Keith A Smyth,	)	C/A No. 0:21-649-RBH-PJG
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
	)	
v.	)	<b>ORDER</b>
	)	
Bryan Stirling, <i>Director</i> ; Chelsea Johnson,	)	
<i>Program Manager, I.C.S.</i> ,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
	)	

Plaintiff Keith A Smyth, a self-represented inmate, filed this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 alleging a violation of his constitutional rights. This matter is before the court on the plaintiff's filing in which he requests the appointment of counsel. (ECF No. 18.)

There is no right to appointed counsel in § 1983 cases. Hardwick v. Ault, 517 F.2d 295 (5th Cir. 1975). The court may use its discretion to request counsel to represent an indigent in a civil action. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1); Mallard v. United States Dist. Court for S. Dist. of Iowa, 490 U.S. 296 (1989). However, such discretion “should be allowed only in exceptional cases.” Cook v. Bounds, 518 F.2d 779, 780 (4th Cir. 1975). Whether exceptional circumstances are present depends on the type and complexity of the case, and the pro se litigant's ability to prosecute it. Whisenant v. Yuam, 739 F.2d 160 (4th Cir. 1984), abrogated on other grounds by Mallard, 490 U.S. 296.

Upon review of the file, the court has determined that there are no exceptional or unusual circumstances presented at this time, nor would the plaintiff be denied due process if the court denied plaintiff's request for counsel. Id. Based on the pleadings before the court, the plaintiff writes well and appears capable of presenting his claims and addressing the legal issues. Although the plaintiff alleges that he is intellectually disabled, he has presented no evidence supporting a

finding that any mental health issues would interfere with his ability to prosecute his claims. Accordingly, the plaintiff's motion requesting counsel under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1) is denied.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

April 23, 2021  
Columbia, South Carolina

  
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Paige J. Gossett  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE